



WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

317 West Main Street, Boise, Idaho 83735-0510

TRANSMITTAL # 9

MEMORANDUM

October 5, 2011

TO: Workforce Development Council

FROM: B. J. Swanson, Chair
Health Care Workforce Planning Partnership

SUBJECT: Amendment to the Nursing Practice Act: Authority for Nurse Workforce Activity
Project Summary and Update: Health Care Workforce Planning Partnership

ACTION REQUESTED: Endorse Proposed Amendment to the Nursing Practice Act

BACKGROUND:

Legislation is being proposed to amend the Nursing Practice Act to provide the Board of Nursing authority to use dedicated funds to support workforce activity. Recommendations to conduct health care workforce analyses have been generated by the Idaho Nursing Advisory Council and its successor, the Health Professions Education Council. Prior to the work of these councils, the Idaho Nursing Workforce Data Center at BSU generated HRSA grant funded nursing workforce reports.

Since then considerable effort has been invested in the collection and analyses of nursing workforce data, resulting in the establishment of Idaho Nursing Workforce Data Center at the Department of Labor. These efforts were initially supported with congressional earmark funds, state general funds and then Workforce Investment Act funds. In acknowledgement of the value of the workforce data generated by the Nursing Workforce Data Center and in anticipation of impending state and federal budget cuts, the Board of Nursing is pursuing clear statutory authority to use the Board's dedicated funds as a possible funding alternative.

The proposed amendment provides authority for the Board of Nursing to use its dedicated funds to support workforce data collection, analyses and research. This amendment will not result in an increase in nursing licensure.

The following language would be added to Section 54-1404 of the Nursing Practice Act:

“(11) To evaluate and develop the education, distribution, and availability of the nursing workforce to provide a basis for improving the delivery of quality health care; or to enter into contracts or agreements with others to provide or fulfill these purposes;”

Project Summary and Update: Idaho Health Care Workforce Planning Partnership

The Idaho Workforce Development Council was awarded (October, 2010) funds for Health Care Workforce Planning. The initial goal is to develop a coordinated workforce data and information system – uniform and consistent across primary care disciplines. The data system is intended to provide a solid foundation upon which to make sound workforce supply and demand decisions.

The primary care disciplines addressed in Idaho’s project include:

- Physicians (family practice, general internal medicine, pediatrics, and obstetrics/gynecology and physician assistants)
- Nurses (including nurse practitioners and LPNs)
- Dentists (including dental hygienists)
- Mental Health Professionals (psychiatrists, clinical social workers, clinical psychologists, psychiatric nurse specialists, and marriage and family therapists)

This planning effort builds upon the recommendations and work already completed by the Idaho Nursing Workforce Advisory Council and the Health Professions Education Council.

The Nursing Workforce Data Center, developed by Idaho’s Nursing Workforce Advisory Council and housed at the Idaho Department of Labor, is the model. The Health Care Workforce Planning initiative is expanding the Data Center’s scope and membership to include the broader range of health care disciplines and to extend data-sharing agreements to other licensing boards.

To this end, relationships have been established with the professional associations, advocacy groups, other leadership entities, and regulatory boards germane to each discipline. Recommendations on how to improve and advance the planning process have been solicited.

As of October, fully executed data sharing agreements are in place with the following:

- State of Idaho Board of Nursing
- Idaho State Board of Dentistry
- Idaho Board of Psychologist Examiners
- Idaho Licensing Board of Professional Counselors and Marriage and Family Therapists
- Idaho Board of Social Work Examiners
- Idaho State Office of Rural Health and Primary Care

While meetings with the Board of Medicine executive and legal staff have been held, barriers regarding confidentiality and their authority to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding for data sharing purposes persist.

Noteworthy progress has been accomplished in the nursing arena. The “Idaho Nursing Overview – January 2011” was issued in mid-February. The report addresses nursing supply and demand, education capacity, faculty issues and presents findings. The publication is available online at <http://lmi.idaho.gov/researchproject>.

Staff continues to collect and catalog information for each of the following planning grant performance benchmarks with assistance from the Business Solutions Health Care Specialists:

1. Analysis of the State labor market information in order to create health care career pathways for students and adults, including dislocated workers;
2. Identification of current and projected high demand State or regional health care sectors for purposes of planning career pathways;
3. Identification of existing Federal, State, and private resources to recruit, educate or train, and retain a skilled health care workforce and strengthen partnerships;
4. Description of the academic and health care industry skill standards for high school graduation, for entry into postsecondary education, and for various credentials and licensure;
5. Identification of State secondary and postsecondary education and training policies, models, or practices for the health care sector, including career information and guidance counseling;
6. Identification of Federal or State policies, rules or other barriers to developing a coherent and comprehensive health care workforce development strategy and a plan to resolve these barriers.

Next steps involve:

- Appointment of the primary care experts to the Steering Committee;
- Phase I data matching and analyses;
- Convening the Steering Committee; drafting the Committee's work plan (the meeting is tentatively planned for November).
- Continued exploration regarding primary care physicians and physician assistant data sources.

A request to extend the duration of the grant through June 30, 2012 has been submitted to the Health Resources and Services Administration.

RECOMMENDATION:

This legislative initiative is consistent with the goals and objectives of the Idaho Workforce Development Council and its sub-committees, the Health Professions Education Council and the Health Care Workforce Planning Partnership. Accordingly, we ask the Council to support passage of the amendment by providing a letter supporting the Board of Nursing's proposed legislation.

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